

The New Hispanic Majority: How Texas Public Schools are Foreshadowing National Trends

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Abstract

Texas and other states that border with Mexico have been leading indicators of public school system trends that may manifest themselves in other areas of the United States in the decade to come. Such manifestations of these trends are likely to have both policy and practice implications. Descriptive statistics and longitudinal data from the National Center for Educational Statistics, the Texas Education Agency, and the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction Educational Programs were used to identify trends that have impacted Texas public school systems over the last decade. Additionally, enrollment projection reports were used to highlight projections that could significantly influence both policy and practice. Such agency reports included the forecast that total national elementary and secondary public school enrollment is projected to increase by 8 percent between 2006 and 2018 (National Center for Educational Statistics [NCES], 2009). NCES considered factors such as birth rate, internal migration, and immigration when forming the enrollment projections. NCES further projected that the number of public school teachers will increase by 17 percent between 2006 and 2018. The increases in both student and teacher populations will vary widely by geographic region (See Figure 1). While most of the South and Southwest will continue to experience significant growth (See Table 1), much of the Northeast will experience student population declines (See Table 2).

Keywords: student population, Hispanic, enrollment, majority, teacher

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The demographics of public school students are changing in both Texas, and across much of the United States. The Texas Education Agency recently released student enrollment numbers in Texas public schools for the 2010-2011 school year. Hispanic students represented 50.2 percent of the 4,933,617 Texas public school students (Texas Education Agency [TEA], 2010). Hispanic students now make up the majority of the Texas public school student population for the first time in Texas history. Additionally, longitudinal Texas public school enrollment data from the previous decade points to the following trends:

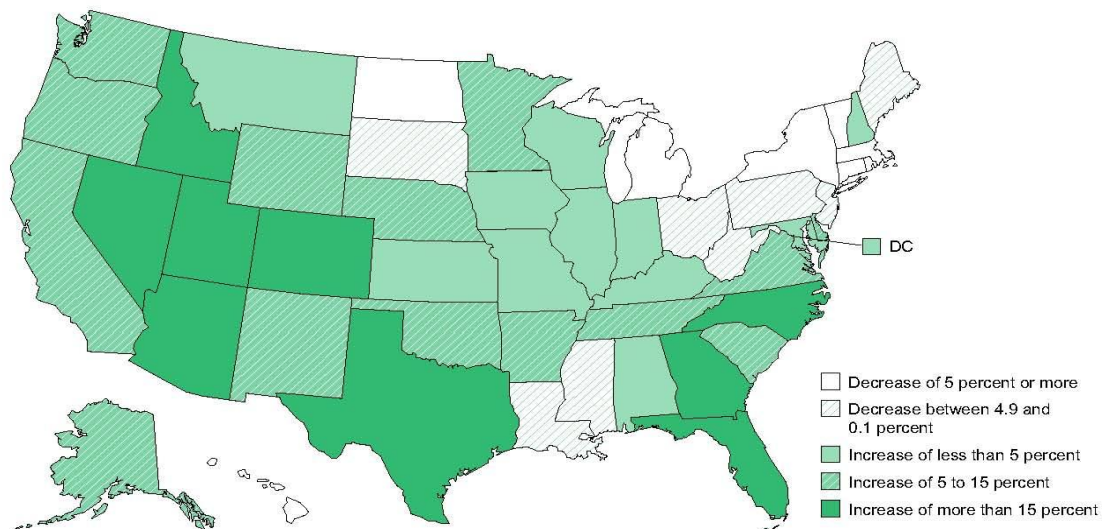
- Increasing overall student population
- Increasing percentage of economically disadvantaged students
- Increasing percentage of Hispanic students
- Decreasing percentage of White students
- Faster enrollment growth in urban settings
- Increasing percentage of limited English proficient students

In addition to the trends listed above, Texas public schools have recently been additionally challenged by budget cuts. While Texas public schools are serving larger percentages of both limited English proficient students and of economically disadvantaged students, the public schools are simultaneously facing funding reductions. These funding cuts exacerbate the challenges associated with the changing trends in Texas public school enrollment data.

The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) projects an increasing overall student population across much of the South and Southwest. The Northeast is projected to experience a decrease in overall student population. With the exception of New Hampshire, the New England states are projected to experience significant student population decline. Texas increased from 3,382,887 public school students in 1990 to 4,525,394 public school students in 2005 (NCES, 2010a). The growth trends in Texas public school enrollment data do not seem to

be isolated to the state of Texas. As shown in Figure 1, much of the country is projected to experience a significant increase in public school enrollment during the period from 2006 through 2018.

Figure 1 Projected percentage change in grades PK–12 enrollment in public schools, by state: Fall 2006 through fall 2018



NOTE: Calculations are based on unrounded numbers. Mean absolute percentage errors of selected education statistics can be found in Table A-2, appendix A. SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "State Nonfiscal Survey of Public Elementary/Secondary Education," 2006–07; and State Elementary and Secondary Enrollment Model, 1980–2006. (This figure was prepared March 2009.)

As Figure 1 illustrates, the projected change in public school student population is not evenly distributed across the country. Arizona, Nevada, and Texas are projected to have the highest percentage growth at 42.2%, 40.2%, and 32.1% respectively. Interestingly, much of the public school student population growth is expected to occur in states with no state income tax. According to the Internal Revenue Service (2011), Alaska, Florida, Nevada, New Hampshire, South Dakota, Texas, Tennessee, Washington, and Wyoming have no state income tax. Of these nine states, eight of the nine states are expected to experience public school student population growth. Only South Dakota is projected to experience a public school student population decline. New Hampshire, the only New England no state income tax state, is also the only New

England state projected to experience public school student population growth. While the author does not imply that a relationship exists between state income tax and public school enrollment, it is an interesting observation that perhaps warrants future study. Table 1 depicts the projected public school student population growth delineated by state.

Table 1 Projected percentage increases in public elementary and secondary school enrollment, by state: 2006 through 2018

State	Percent change	State	Percent change
Arizona	42.2	Alaska	8.5
Nevada	40.2	Oklahoma	7.1
Texas	32.1	Nebraska	7.0
Utah	29.7	South Carolina	5.8
Idaho	26.1	Minnesota	5.5
Georgia	25.2	Missouri	4.7
Florida	24.0	Kansas	3.8
North Carolina	22.9	Kentucky	3.6
Colorado	19.3	Montana	3.3
Tennessee	12.9	Indiana	3.2
Delaware	11.7	District of Columbia	3.1
Virginia	11.5	Maryland	2.4
Oregon	11.0	Illinois	2.3
Wyoming	10.6	Wisconsin	2.2
New Mexico	10.5	Alabama	1.4
Arkansas	9.1	Iowa	1.3
Washington	8.7	New Hampshire	1.1
California	8.6		

SOURCE: U.S. Dept. of Education, NCES, Common Core of Data surveys and State Public Elementary and Secondary Enrollment Model. (See reference table 5.)

Sixteen states are projected to experience declines in public school enrollment. Rhode Island, New York, and North Dakota are projected to have the largest student population declines, each decreasing by 11.5%, 9.0%, and 8.5% respectively. Table 2 depicts the projected decrease in public school student population delineated by state.

Table 2 Projected percent decreases in public elementary and secondary school enrollment, by state: 2006 through 2018

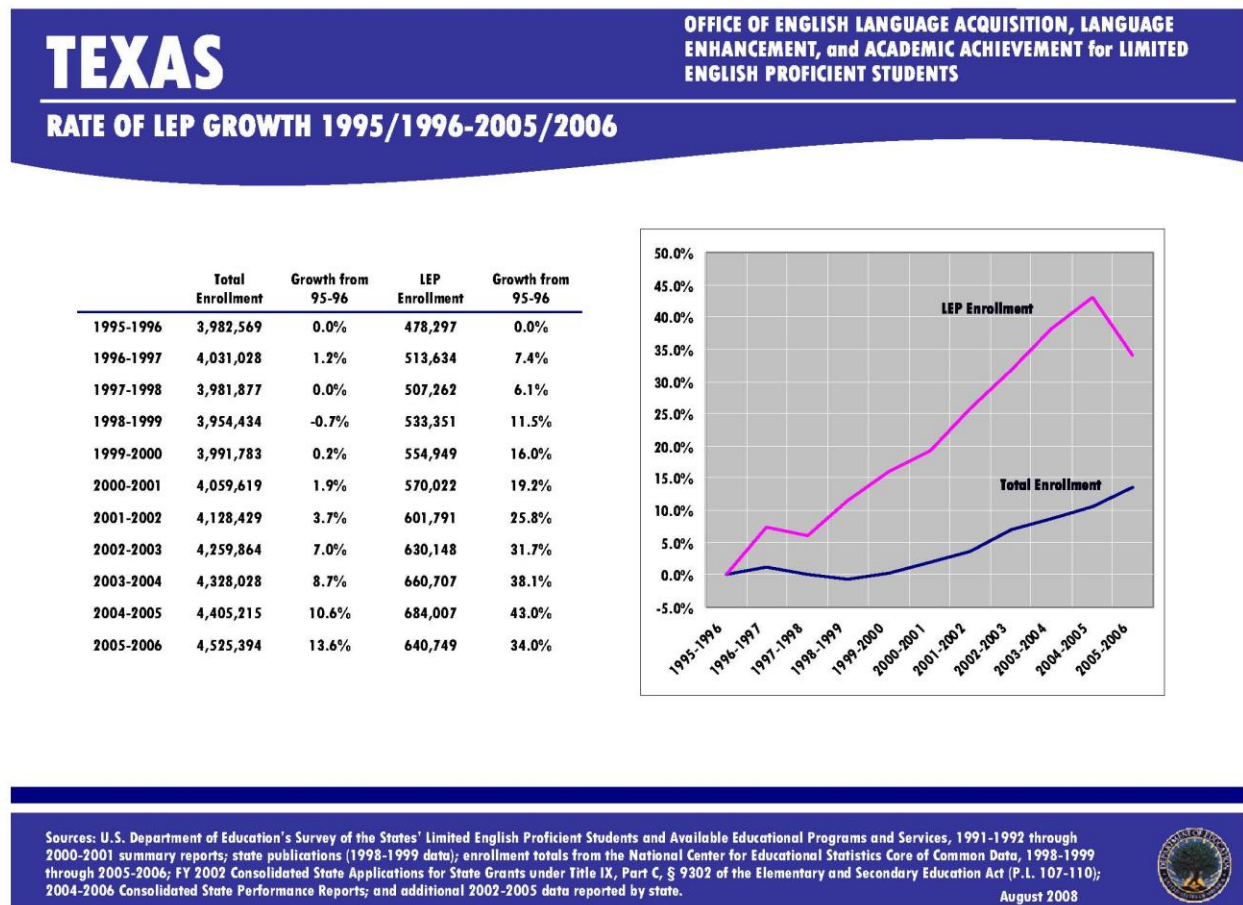
State	Percent change	State	Percent change
Rhode Island	-11.5	Maine	-4.5
New York	-9.0	Louisiana	-3.6
North Dakota	-8.5	Ohio	-3.1
Michigan	-7.9	West Virginia	-2.4
Vermont	-7.4	New Jersey	-2.4
Massachusetts	-6.2	Pennsylvania	-1.7
Connecticut	-5.9	Mississippi	-0.8
Hawaii	-5.7	South Dakota	-0.5

SOURCE: U.S. Dept. of Education, NCES, Common Core of Data surveys and State Public Elementary and Secondary Enrollment Model. (See reference table 5.)

In addition to the overall public school student population growth, the state of Texas has experienced rapid growth in both the number of Hispanic students and the number of limited English proficient (LEP) students. During the decade from 1995-2005, the number of LEP students enrolled in Texas public school increased at over twice the rate of increase in the

general student population. Figure 2 depicts the growth in both the LEP and total student population by academic school year.

Figure 2



Like the projected increases in total student population, the increases in the Hispanic student population do not seem to be isolated to Texas. The United States Census Bureau (2010) reported that growth in resident population during the period from July 1, 2008 to July 1, 2009 was over four times higher for Hispanics than for White, Not Hispanics. The ratio of deaths to births was much higher for the White, Not Hispanic group than it was for Hispanics. International migration was higher for Hispanics than it was for the White, Not Hispanic group. Collectively, these trends are resulting in an increased percentage of Hispanic resident

population in the United States and a decreased percentage of the White, Not Hispanic resident population. Table 3 depicts the changes in resident population within the United States between July 1, 2008 and July 1, 2009.

Table 3. Estimates of the Components of Resident Population Change by Race and Hispanic Origin for the United States: July 1, 2008 to July 1, 2009					
Race and Hispanic Origin	Total Population Change ¹	Natural Increase	Vital Events		Net International Migration ²
			Births	Deaths	
TOTAL POPULATION	2,631,704	1,776,800	4,262,897	2,486,097	854,905
One Race	2,466,890	1,620,872	4,089,486	2,468,614	846,321
White	1,613,323	1,059,475	3,162,285	2,102,810	555,145
Black or African American	436,464	357,533	660,863	303,330	78,633
American Indian and Alaska Native	56,038	48,399	61,569	13,170	7,558
Asian	348,568	146,411	194,217	47,806	201,562
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	12,497	9,054	10,552	1,498	3,423
Two or More Races	164,814	155,928	173,411	17,483	8,584
<i>Race alone or in combination:³</i>					
White	1,763,112	1,201,968	3,319,448	2,117,480	562,162
Black or African American	527,230	443,871	751,988	308,117	82,875
American Indian and Alaska Native	83,670	73,750	96,528	22,778	9,810
Asian	411,778	206,371	259,615	53,244	204,699
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	25,271	20,862	24,452	3,590	4,375
HISPANIC	1,440,756	974,091	1,101,368	127,277	463,973
WHITE ALONE, NOT HISPANIC	322,123	205,926	2,190,026	1,984,100	119,879

¹ Total population change includes a residual. This residual represents the change in population that cannot be attributed to any specific demographic component. See National Terms and Definitions at <http://www.census.gov/popest/topics/terms/national.html>.

² Migration between the United States and Puerto Rico, (c) the net migration of natives to and from the United States, and (d) the net movement of the Armed Forces population between the United States and overseas.

³ 'In combination' means in combination with one or more other races. The sum of each component of change for the five race groups adds to more than the total for each component of change because individuals may report more than one race.

Note: Hispanic origin is considered an ethnicity, not a race. Hispanics may be of any race. The original race data from Census 2000 are modified to eliminate the "Some Other Race" category. For more information see <http://www.census.gov/popest/archives/files/MRSF-01-US1.html>.

Suggested Citation:
Table 6. Estimates of the Components of Resident Population Change by Race and Hispanic Origin for the United States: July 1, 2008 to July 1, 2009 (NC-EST2009-06)
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division
 Release Date: June 2010

In addition to the practice and policy changes associated with changing student demographics, the sheer increase in the number of students will result in an increased demand for teachers (NCES, 2009). Rapidly increasing student populations will likely result in the construction of additional schools, the hiring of additional teachers, and possibly result in increased class sizes. NCES projects that there will be a 17 percent increase in the number of public school teachers in the United States between 2006 and 2018. Private schools are projected to increase by 6 percent during that same period. The demand for public school teachers continues to grow at a faster rate than the demand for private school teachers. That trend is projected to continue through 2018. While the growth in the demand for teachers continues to increase, the growth rate in the demand for both public and private school teachers

is projected to grow at a slower rate from 2006 to 2018 than it grew from 1993 to 2006. Figure 3 depicts the middle alternative projected increase in the number of teachers delineated by public and private school setting.

Public school teachers

The number of teachers in public elementary and secondary schools (figure J; reference figure 30 and table 32)

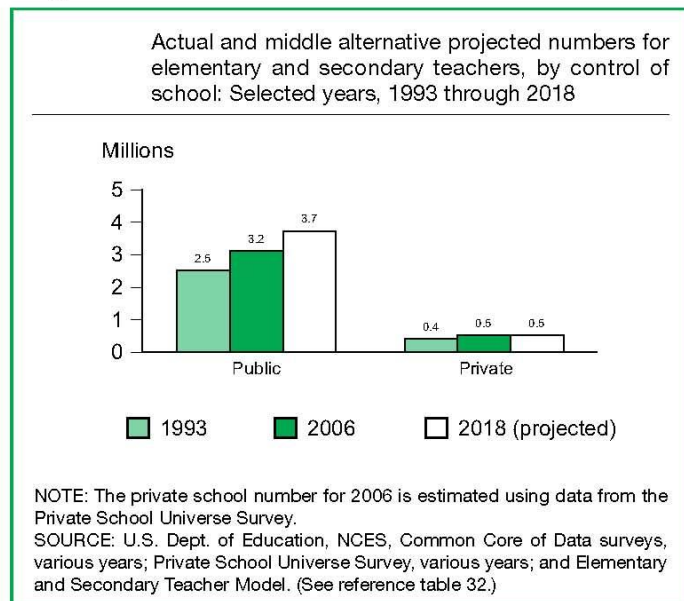
- increased 27 percent between 1993 and 2006; and
- is projected to increase an additional 17 percent between 2006 and 2018 in the middle alternative projections.

Private school teachers

The number of teachers in private elementary and secondary schools

- increased 25 percent between 1993 and 2006; and
- is projected to increase an additional 6 percent between 2006 and 2018 in the middle alternative projections.

Figure 3



The growth in the Hispanic student population, the LEP student population, and the student population at large in the State of Texas foreshadows changes to come in the student populations in many parts of the United States. Educational systems that incorporate projected student population changes into their strategic plans will be better prepared to meet both the future challenges and opportunities associated with those associated student population changes.

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